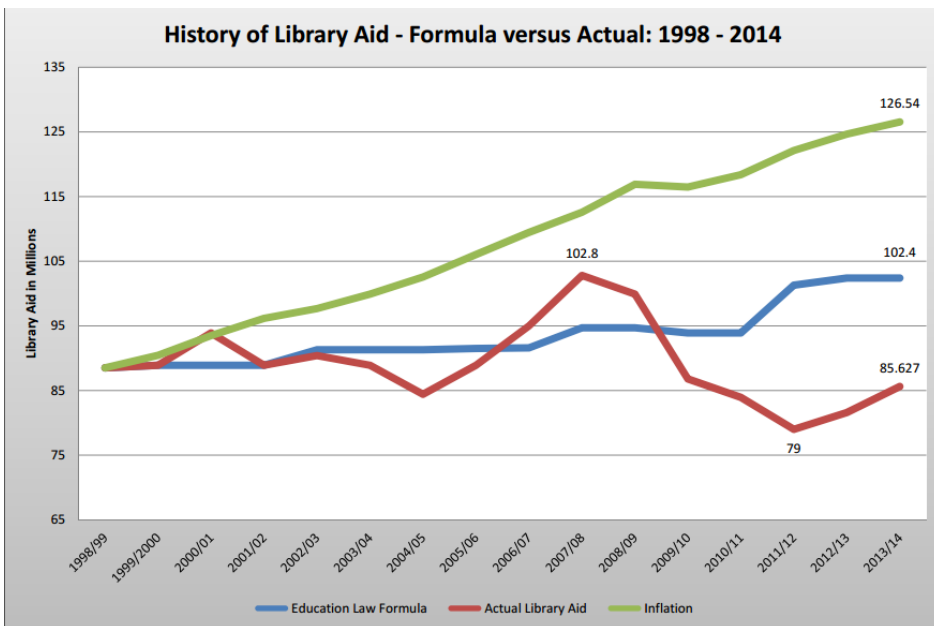


A brief history of NYS library funding

Between 1998-2006, library systems received no state funding increases, while other educational institutions received generous increases. When economic conditions worsened, libraries were then the first to receive cuts.

Between 2008-2011, Library Aid suffered six dramatic cuts — a 23% reduction! In comparison, school aid dropped only 2% during the same period.

Small restorations in 2012, 2013, & 2014 were a step in the right direction, but we still have a long way to go. **Library Aid remains below 1998 levels (a nearly 15.6% cut from Ed. Law), which is unsustainable. Our libraries need adequate resources to serve their communities!**



Did you know?

Fully-funded Library Aid would comprise less than one-tenth of 1% of the total state budget.

Why are library systems important?

Cuts in Library Aid fall heaviest upon library systems, which serve as the backbone of our information infrastructure. They provide consolidated services, shared programs, and specialized resources that benefit library users and save money for taxpayers.



Through the Finger Lakes Library System, our local libraries offer access to a wide range of materials and services that they could never afford individually.

For every \$1 of State Aid put into a public library system, approximately \$7 in services is provided for public library users.

Libraries: Essential in a tough economy

- **Community demand for libraries is up across the state.** Between 2007-2010, visits to libraries in NYS increased from 112 to 117 million!
- **Libraries offer essential services.** For 67% of households earning less than \$30,000 annually, and for 33% of African-American and Hispanic households, the local library is the primary source of internet access.
- **Jobseekers need libraries — often simply to apply for a job!** In addition to their free educational training resources, libraries provide free computers, printers, and internet access. Fewer than 44% of the top 100 U.S. retailers accept paper applications.

Libraries ARE education!

- For pre-school aged children, libraries have continuously provided opportunities for enrichment in an environment dedicated to equality of access and free inquiry. **When schools close at the end of each day, each week and each school year, libraries remain open to New York's children and families.**



- Libraries are chartered by the same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions. Library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education. **Libraries are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State.**

- **The New York State Board of Regents has recommended a \$2.8M increase to the Library Construction Aid program;** to begin to address the over \$1B in accumulated need for capital improvements to New York's libraries.

♥♥♥ **Thank You For Your Support!** ♥♥♥

Please stay in touch to advocate for libraries year-round:

- Visit us online at www.flls.org/advocacy and www.facebook.com/fingerlakeslibrarysystem.
- Sign up for the NYLA Action List online at www.capwiz.com/ala/ny/mlm/signup to receive timely alerts when libraries need your support.

2015 Advocacy Talking Points

*Over the last six years, community demand for our libraries has risen, but our funding has been cut dramatically. Total education spending in last year's enacted budget increased 5.7%, but library aid increased only 1.2%. **Library aid should increase each year in proportion with education funding!***



We Need Your Help!

Please help us maintain our community's critical information infrastructure. NYS Library Aid is currently at 1997 levels. Despite the stewardship and dedication of librarians, trustees and Friends across the state, it has become increasingly difficult to provide 21st century library services with 20th century funding. Ask your legislators to restore Library Aid to \$102.6M in this year's budget — the full amount mandated by NYS Education Law.

How to Help:

1. Contact your NYS Assemblyperson and Senator by email, phone, or mail (blank postcards provided).
2. Join us in Albany on Wednesday, February 26 to meet with your legislators in person. Free transportation provided! Register online at <http://bit.ly/183GCK0>.

♥♥♥ **Thank You!!!** ♥♥♥



Connecting public libraries in Cayuga,
Cortland, Seneca, Tioga, and Tompkins
Counties in New York State